

HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: UNITING CHURCH

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: Wills Street DUNKELD

STUDY NUMBER: 137

HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

OTHER NAME/S OF PLACE: DUNKELD METHODIST CHURCH, WESLYAN CHURCH

PRECINCT: outside

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

ALLOTMENT: Part **SECTION:** 5 **PARISH:** PARISH OF DUNKELD
CA 6

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 433J 16; VicRoads 229 S4; located on the south side of Wills Street, between Templeton and Sterling Streets, one block south of the Glenelg Highway.

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: Local



Uniting Church, Wills Street, Dunkeld.

Image Date: 2/11/01

EXTENT OF LISTING:

To the extent of: 1. All the buildings and all of the land

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The Dunkeld Uniting Church is a modest red brick building in the Early English Gothic revival style. It has a rectangular plan of four bays divided by buttresses, no porch and no chancel or vestry. The gabled roof is pitched at 60 degrees and is clad with corrugated iron. Architectural details are elaborated in cement render, now painted white. The façade is symmetrical about the front door which is timber and double leaved. Above the door there is a large tripartite window under a simple hood mould. The side windows are treated as single lancets.

In front of the church marking the entrance gate there is a pair of Cupressus sempervirens 'stricta', Italian Cypresses, one of which is twice the height of the other. They appear top date from the construction of the church. A timber church hall was been built later on the east side of the church which is now much altered.

HISTORY:

The history of the Dunkeld Uniting Church starts in 1864, when the Reverend James W. Tuckfield arrived in Peshurst as the second Wesleyan minister in the Hamilton circuit. He organised and preached at the first Wesleyan service in Dunkeld, held in a small cottage on the northern side of Parker Street (Centenary Committee, 3).

In 1867, the Crown granted allotments 6 and 7 of section 9 (of the Township of Dunkeld) as land for the Wesleyan Church. This land comprised one acre, fronting Wills Street. At about the same time, the Crown granted other churches land in Wills Street; one acre to the Presbyterian Church and one and a half acres to the Church of England. The Catholic Church was only granted half an acre of land in a different street, however, Bishop James Alipius Goold purchased two acres of the adjacent land.

A timber church and stables (probably timber or brick) were constructed on Allotment 6 by 1869, and services continued to be held regularly as a part of the Hamilton circuit. By 1871, the Dunkeld and Peshurst churches had separated themselves from Hamilton, forming the 'Peshurst circuit' based at Peshurst. This circuit remained until 1891, when the headquarters were transferred from Peshurst to Dunkeld, and a new timber parsonage (which no longer survives) was built by Butler and Ussher & Moyston (Tonkin, 1971).

The Wesleyan Methodists had introduced Methodism into the Port Phillip District in 1838. Joseph Townsend introduced a division of Methodism, the Wesleyan Methodist Association in 1850. This body was formed by Methodists secessionists in large industrial cities in northern England as a protest against the clericalism of Wesleyan Methodism Jabez Bunting. However, Methodism continued to be fractious in the turbulent years of early Victoria. Being non-hierarchical and at some distance from large centres of population, small groups of Methodists were generally able to come together, form a congregation (or assembly) and build a church (or chapel) without having to refer their actions back to a higher authority.

In 1902, the four branches of the Methodist church (including the Wesleyan Methodists) to become the Methodist Church, at which time the church became known as the Dunkeld Methodist Church. Shortly after, in 1907, the Trust Secretary, Mr. E. E. Allen passed a resolution to build a new church, with support from present and past members. The resolution was approved, and over the next six years, plans of a new church were investigated, until finally in 1913, a tender was accepted to construct a new brick church for 708 pounds. The architects were Clegg, Miller and Cain, and the builder was E. H Patterson of Hamilton. Local materials were to be used, including freestone from the Mount Abrupt quarries (used for the base), and locally made bricks.

The new church was opened in January, 1914, and at a later date four stained glass windows were placed in the Church in memory of laymen who had served faithfully and donated funds to the construction of the church. The windows over the entrance commemorate Richard Howell (donated 150 pounds to the building of the new church), George Taylor (long serving layman), John Woodburn (donated 150 pounds to building of new

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church), and in the east wall, Joseph Mereweather (one of the Trustees responsible for planning the new church).

Several additions and changes have been made to the interior of the church since its construction in 1914. These include the erection of an Honour Roll above the pulpit in 1919, which records the names of those who served and fell in World War One; changes to the lighting system from petrol lamps to electricity in 1939; carpeting the isles and the sanctuary; a communion table and the erection of a Latin Cross in 1959 above the pulpit, relocating the honor roll to the west wall.

THEMATIC CONTEXT:

Theme 8 Developing Australia's cultural life

8.6 Worshipping

8.6.1 Worshipping together

8.6.3 Founding Australian religious institutions

8.6.4 Making places for worship

8.8 Remembering the fallen

8.12 Living in and around Australian homes

8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements

CONDITION:

The church is in excellent condition

INTEGRITY:

High degree of integrity to 1914 construction date

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is significant?

Dunkeld Uniting Church, formerly Dunkeld Wesleyan and later, Dunkeld Methodist Church, is located on the south side of Wills Street in the centre of the township of Dunkeld. The brick church, built in 1914, is the second to be built on the land, replacing an earlier timber church, built in 1867. The current brick church is constructed of locally made bricks on a freestone base, in an early English Gothic revival style. The architects were Clegg, Miller and Cain, and the builder was E. H Patterson of Hamilton. The church was associated with many local merchants of the township, Mrs. George Taylor laying the foundation stone in 1913. The first minister Rev. James W. Tuckfield, whose father was a well known Aboriginal missionary near Birregurra, and whose family was influential in the Victorian Methodist church in the later half of the nineteenth century.. The Church began as a Wesleyan Church under the Hamilton circuit, later breaking away to be under the Penshurst Circuit, and finally as the church increased in popularity, to become the centre of the Dunkeld Circuit. In 1902, it became the Methodist church, when the four branches of Methodism combined, becoming the United Church by the late 1970s. The church is in excellent condition and retains a high degree of integrity.

How is it significant?

Dunkeld Uniting Church is of historical and architectural significance to the township of Penshurst and to the Southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?

The Dunkeld Uniting Church is of historical significance as the expression of the role and position of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, and subsequently the Uniting Church, and its congregation in the community for over one hundred and thirty years. It is of architectural significance for its use of the Gothic revival style to express religious values, for the range of its memorial objects and windows and as a comparison with the churches of other denominations in Dunkeld.

COMPARISON:

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299 Uniting Church (Former Presbyterian), Glenelg Highway, Glenthompson
365 Uniting Church (Former Methodist), Scott and Cameron Street, Cavendish
241 Wesleyan Methodist Church (Former), 77 Bell Street, Peshurst
187 Uniting Church (Former Methodist), Hamilton-Port Fairy Road, Byaduk

ASSESSED BY: TFH

ASSESSMENT DATE:

21-Jan-02

EXISTING LISTINGS:

HERITAGE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Include in VHR Include in RNE Include in Local Planning Scheme

No Recommendations for Inclusions

REFERENCES:

| Author | Title | Year | Page |
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